

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Final Office Action mailed on August 29, 2003. Claims 1-14 are pending in the application with Claims 1, 8, 9, 11, 13 and 14 being in independent form. By the present amendment, the drawings, the specification and Claims 1, 8, 9, 10 and 12 have been amended, independent Claims 13 and 14 have been canceled and independent Claim 15 has been added. No new matter or issues are believed to be introduced by the amendments.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowance of Claims 8 and 11. Applicant also gratefully acknowledges the allowance of Claim 12, if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejections(s) under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Applicant further acknowledges the allowance of Claims 3, 5-7 and 10 if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In the Final Office Action, the disclosure was objected to due to several informalities and the drawings were objected for not having several reference labels. The disclosure and the drawings have been amended in a manner which is believed to obviate the objections. FIG. 2 has been amended to include reference labels 70a, 70b, 72a, 72b, and “g” and FIG. 4C has been amended to include reference labels 60a, 62a, 64a, 66a, 68a and 70a. It is respectfully submitted that FIG. 4B does not show the elements identified as 70b and 72b in the specification and FIG. 4C does not show the elements identified as 55a, 70b, 72b and g in the specification. Therefore, these two figures were not amended to include these reference labels. Due to the amendments made to the disclosure and the drawings by the Applicant, withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 8, 9, 13 and 14 were objected to. Claims 13 and 14 have been canceled. Claims 1, 8 and 9 have been amended in a manner which is believed to overcome the objection. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

I. Rejection of Claim 12 Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claim 12 was amended in a manner which is believed to overcome the rejection. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112 with respect to Claim 12 is respectfully requested.

II. Rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4, 9, 13 and 14 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 4, 9, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 4,429,286 issued to Nichols et al. (“Nichols et al.”). Claims 13 and 14 have been canceled.

Applicant has amended Claims 1 and 9 in a manner which is believed to better define Applicant’s invention and to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Nichols et al. In particular, Applicant has added the limitations of previously amended and canceled Claim 5 into Claim 1 and added several of the limitations of currently amended Claim 10 into Claim 9; the Examiner indicates in the Final Office Action that Claims 5 and 10 recite patentable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Claims 1 and 9 are believed to now recite patentable subject matter, and therefore, withdrawal of the rejection with respect to Claims 1 and 9 and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

Claims 2 and 4 depend from Claim 1, and therefore includes the limitations of Claim 1. Therefore, for at least the same reasons given above for Claim 1, Claim 2 and 4 are patentably distinct over Nichols et al. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection with respect to Claims 2 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

III. New Claim 15

New Claim 15 is analogous to currently amended Claim 1 as rewritten to include the limitations of previously amended Claim 2 and original Claim 3. The Examiner has indicated, as stated above, that original Claim 3 recites patentable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicant submits that new Claim 15 includes patentable subject matter and is therefore in condition for allowance.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all claims presently pending in the application, namely, Claims 1-12 and 15, are believed to be in condition for allowance and patentably distinguishable over the art of record.

If the Examiner should have any questions concerning this communication or feels that an interview would be helpful, the Examiner is requested to call Applicant's undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



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